

# Managing Child's Screen Time

## During School Holidays

\* MWS is an MSF-appointed Social Service Agency conducting secular parenting programmes.

**Parents, how are we feeling with the upcoming school holidays?** Excited? Anxious? Are we stressing over how to manage our child? Increasingly, a common problem we face is **managing their screentime** during the holidays.



## Potential Holiday Screen Time Problems in Children

Becoming **addicted** to digital devices and finding it hard to turn it off or enjoy other offline activities

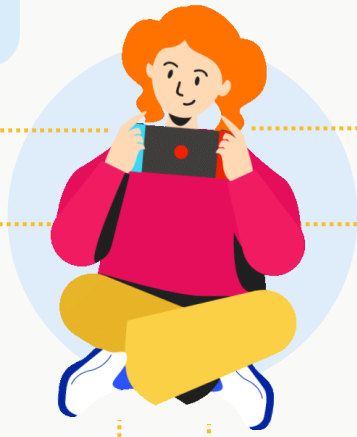
**Insufficient physical activity**, outdoor time and **reluctance** to participate in family activities

Developing **unhealthy eating habits**, including snacking during screentime, irregular meal times and **being distracted by devices** during meal times

**Sleeping well beyond their usual bedtime** during normal school days and developing **physical problems** with vision (sore eyes, blurred vision) & posture (neck & spine issues)

Having **problems to readjust to normal school routine** when school reopens

**Increased emotional outbursts** after long periods of use or when told to finish a screen activity



## 7 Tips to Prevent Holiday Screen Time Problems

01.

Create a **Screen Time Management Plan** before the holidays begin. Have a conversation with them on how they would like to occupy their free time during school holidays. Talk about the importance of a balance between screentime & offline activities and also times with the family. Remind them to include holiday homework in their plans if applicable.



02.

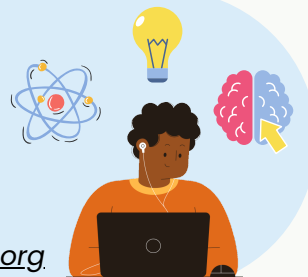
Use a **Behaviour Chart** to motivate your child to practice the behaviours agreed upon. It involves listing out two or three specific, measurable and achievable behaviours and using simple incentives such as stickers & rewards. There are free samples here that you can customise prepared by rewardcharts4kids:  
*Samples from rewardcharts4kids: [www.tinyurl.com/rewardsforkids](http://www.tinyurl.com/rewardsforkids)*



03.

Take time to help your child find **high-quality, age-appropriate online content**. Quality screentime activities can include interactive educational apps and videos which can be a wonderful addition to your child's holiday fun instead of mindlessly scrolling through social media.

*Possible Resource from common sense media: [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)*



04.

**Get involved in what your child is doing online**. This is not only educational for you; it also communicates that we value them and what they're doing, and can prevent an "us v. them" situation from developing.



05.

**Establish tech-free times** such as during meal times. It's important that parents **role-model** this. Parents can also role-model not assessing & responding to text when having a conversation with their child.



06.

**Be specific** in your instructions about cut-off points. For example, "You can watch two episodes of Pokemon, and then turn off the TV" or "You can get to level three in the game, and then you need to turn it off."



07.

Use **parental controls** to ensure kids aren't accessing adult content. It keeps kids safe, and it also encourages mums and dads to talk to their kids about their online activity.

*Resource to set up parental controls: [tinyurl.com/parentalcontrolsresource](http://tinyurl.com/parentalcontrolsresource)*



## Still need more support for parenting?

Scan the QR code for **fully subsidised one-on-one coaching** sessions with accredited Family Life Educators to learn more.

Alternatively, you may use the following url: [tinyurl.com/MWSTriplePFormEast](http://tinyurl.com/MWSTriplePFormEast)  
For more enquiries, please email: [mwsfspeast@mws.sg](mailto:mwsfspeast@mws.sg)

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